



Town of Acton Recreation Department

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Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director

February 23, 2012

Mr. Walter Foster
Community Preservation Committee
c/o Roland Bartl, Planning Director
Acton Town Hall
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720
Re: Skate Park Skatebowl Funding and Maintenance

Dear Mr. Foster,

I would like to thank the committee for their approval of the T.J. O'Grady Skate Park application. I would also like to respond to concerns expressed about the condition of the T.J. O'Grady Skate Park during your recent deliberations, and to thank the committee for bringing them to my attention.

I have been consulting with individuals familiar with the challenges of maintaining these facilities. The users scatter their trash around the park and don't use the two trash barrels provided, which are collected by Town crews three times a week. There are individuals in town, not necessarily skaters, who have caused vandalism at the park. These individuals are well known to the police and are difficult to "catch in the act". Damage to the water fountain and water meter is an example of this activity.

I have spoken to a representative from Easternboarder in Nashua, a popular skateboard shop, who visited the site with us last week. We discussed the new skatebowl but also discussed graffiti and cleanup issues. I have some good recommendations from him that I plan to make use of. Sense of ownership is definitely a key part of it, which he suggested should be coming from the older skaters. I believe that we can cultivate this as we work on developing improvements to the park and our relationship with the skaters who support them.

Trash collection signs will be posted on each of the two barrels to remind users of their responsibility to deposit their trash and our department will be doing weekly inspections and trash collection, if necessary, to insure that the park does not become unsightly. We regularly organize spring & fall cleanups of the skate park, but with the mild weather, the skate park has been active all winter. Most years, it is snowed in until late March!

We have obtained replacement parts for the water fountain and are working with the Water District to repair water access to the fountain. I have not had much success with graffiti removal products. When the weather temperatures moderate, I will be painting over all graffiti areas and addressing any new graffiti making efforts immediately.

Maintenance funds for the skate park and other municipal facilities we oversee such as NARA Park, playgrounds and athletic fields, are underwritten by Recreation revolving funds, generated by fees we collect, primarily from our NARA Camp program and field and facility rentals. Our Natural Resources crew provides manpower and some funding via their General Fund based budget. We are challenged by many competing needs for the funds and manpower we have.

Please let me know if there are any follow up questions or concerns that I can address.

Sincerely,

Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director